

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL**

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**ATTACHMENT 14**

Date: August 20, 2015

To: State Board of Fire Services

From: Mike Richwine, Assistant State Fire Marshal

SUBJECT/AGENDA ACTION ITEM:
SBFS / CHP Statement of Cooperation**Recommended Actions:**
Approve language for release**Background Information:**

Several highway emergency incidents have resulted in confusion and even confrontation regarding the fire service's need to provide protection for crews from traffic and the California Highway Patrol's (CHP) need to open freeway lanes to avoid traffic congestion and avert further highway occurrences. As a result of these incidents, State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) requested a discussion with the CHP regarding clarification of the law that establishes them as the Incident Commander for all on highway incidents.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

SBFS requested Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) and CHP draft a joint Statement of Cooperation (SOC) to encourage collaboration between the California fire service and CHP and to recognize each agencies roles and responsibilities at highway emergency incidents. The agreement seeks to facilitate cooperation and a safe and efficient response for first responders, while securing the safety of victims at the scenes of emergency incidents and the motorist. The SOC should be distributed to the member agencies and associations of the SBFS; the State Fire Marshal request wide distribution to fire service members and/ or employees.

Attachments: Draft Statement of Cooperation
Example of Local Agencies Cooperation



STATEMENT OF COOPERATION
BETWEEN CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL
AND
STATE BOARD OF FIRE SERVICES



Millions of citizens depend on California's law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services. THIS STATEMENT OF COOPERATION (SOC) will help to address concerns regarding scene management of traffic collisions and emergency incidents occurring on or affecting the state highway transportation system. The SOC is made by and between the California Highway Patrol, hereafter called CHP, and the State Board of Fire Services, hereafter called SBFS. This SOC establishes collaboration between the SBFS and CHP to:

- Develop a common understanding and respect of each disciplines roles and responsibilities at highway emergency incidents
- Provide a safe and efficient response for first responders
- Secure the safety of victims at the scenes of emergency incidents and the motoring public.

The SBFS provides a forum for addressing fire protection and prevention issues of statewide concern; this includes the fire service's interactions with allied agencies. The SBFS approves technical and performance standards and curricula for training of fire service personnel developed from state and national standards. The SBFS also serves to advise the state fire marshal on the dissemination of regulations, state standards and practices.

It should be recognized that both CHP and fire service personnel have the common objectives of preservation of life, protecting property, and protection of the environment. Furthermore, both entities seek to ensure the safety of their personnel and equipment at incident scenes. These common objectives are achieved through application of the Incident Command System (ICS), as outlined in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) guides, and adherence to mandates set forth by the codes and regulations of the State of California. The CHP recognizes the primary focus and basis of operational procedures and tactics of fire service personnel is the establishment of a safe work zone and care for victims. The SBFS recognizes that CHP personnel, while having responsibility for scene safety, also have the mandate for ensuring the safety for other motorists in the vicinity of incident scenes, including the safety of those encountering the residual slowing or stopping of traffic after the scene is cleared. According to United States

Department of Transportation statistics, secondary collisions following an initial incident are responsible for 18 percent of traffic fatalities.

To this end, the SBFS will encourage the training and oversight of the California fire service in the proper response to highway incidents involving traffic collisions, hazardous materials, natural disasters, and public service calls impacting the public and California's highways. The SBFS shall promote through its individual members that policies, procedures, curriculum and certifications include appropriate training.

This SOC acknowledges that communication and training prior to an incident is vital for establishing and maintaining a positive working relationship between CHP and fire personnel in order to achieve common public safety objectives. To achieve the goal of interagency/disciplinary integration and cooperation, it is recommended that joint training and exercises be conducted at the local level. In addition, a method of post incident conflict resolution should be established to resolve issues that do arise in order to maintain a good working relationship.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
HIGHWAY PATROL

CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF
FIRE SERVICES

JOSEPH A. FARROW
Commissioner

TONYA L. HOOVER
Chair

Date _____

Date _____

EXAMPLE

Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association Operations Section Apparatus Placement	PAGE 1 OF 7	EFFECTIVE DATE October 10, 2007 APPROVED BY SCFCA PROCEDURE
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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This procedure identifies parking practices for apparatus that will provide maximum protection and safety for personnel operating in or near moving vehicle traffic. It also identifies several approaches for individual practices to keep firefighters safe while exposed to vehicle traffic.
- 1.2. All personnel should understand and appreciate the high risk that firefighters are exposed to when operating in or near moving vehicle traffic. We should always operate from a defensive posture. Always consider moving vehicles as a threat to your safety. Each day, emergency personnel are exposed to motorists of varying abilities, with or without licenses, with or without legal restrictions, and driving at speeds from creeping to well beyond the speed limit. Some of these motorists are the vision impaired, the alcohol and/or drug impaired. On top of everything else, motorists will often be looking at the scene and not the road.
- 1.3. Nighttime operations are particularly hazardous. Visibility is reduced, and the flashings of emergency lights tend to confuse motorists. Studies have shown that multiple headlights of emergency apparatus (coming from different angles at the scene) tend to blind drivers as they approach.

2. REFERENCES

- 2.1. California Penal Code 148.2
- 2.2. California Penal Code 409.3
- 2.3. California Health and Safety Code 1798.6
- 2.4. FIREScope ICS 420 (FOG) Field Operations Guild
- 2.5. Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Section 6I

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. **INCIDENT COMMANDER (I/C):** Normally established by the first arriving resource, until relieved by a supervisor. Determines Incident Objectives and Strategies for resources. Establishes the immediate priorities.
- 3.2. **UNIFIED COMMAND:** Joint Command with representatives from all agencies with jurisdictional responsibilities. The Fire Officer and the CHP Officer shall establish a Unified Command and confirm Incident Objectives and Strategies.
- 3.3. **FREEWAY:** a freeway is an access-controlled, divided highway. Most freeways are four lanes, or two lanes each direction, but many freeways widen to incorporate more lanes as they enter urban areas.
- 3.4. **NON-FREEWAY:** a roadway, parking lot or other surface over which vehicles travel.
- 3.5. **MANAGEMENT OF THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT:** The coordination of operations which occur at the location of an accident.

4. POLICY

- 4.1. It shall be the policy to position apparatus at the scene of emergencies in a manner that best protects the work area and personnel from vehicle traffic and other hazards.
- 4.2. Fire and CHP need to establish unified command as soon as possible to jointly provide a safe parking and work area and to quickly resolve the incident.

5. PROCEDURES

5.1. SAFETY BENCHMARKS

Emergency personnel are at great risk while operating in or around moving traffic. There are approaches that can be taken to protect yourself and all crew members:

5.1.2 Never trust the traffic:

Always maintain an acute awareness of the high risk of working in or around moving traffic. Never trust moving traffic. Always look before you step! Always keep an eye on the traffic!

Crews should exit the curb side or non-traffic side of the vehicle whenever possible.

Always look before stepping out of apparatus, or into any traffic areas. When walking around fire apparatus parked adjacent to moving traffic, keep an eye on traffic and walk as close to fire apparatus as possible.

5.1.3. Engage in proper protective parking:

Always position apparatus to protect the scene, patients, emergency personnel, and provide a protected work area. Where possible, angle the apparatus toward the curb. This will direct motorist around the scene. Apparatus positioning must also allow for adequate parking space for other fire apparatus (if needed), and a safe work area for emergency personnel. Allow enough distance to prevent a moving vehicle from knocking fire apparatus into the work areas.

The area must be protected so that patients can be extricated, treated, moved about the scene, and loaded into ambulances safely. Remember to position ambulances to protect patient loading areas.

At intersections, or where the incident may be near the middle of the street, two or more sides of the incident may need to be protected. Block all exposed sides. Where apparatus is in limited numbers, prioritize the blocking from the most critical to the least critical.

For first arriving engine companies where a charged hoseline may be needed, angle the engine so that the pump panel is "down stream," on the opposite side of on-coming traffic. This will protect the pump operator.

The first company officer (or Command) must assess the parking needs of later-arriving fire apparatus and specifically direct the parking and placement of these vehicles as they arrive to provide protective

blocking of the scene. This officer must operate as an initial safety officer.

Once enough fire apparatus have "blocked" the scene, park or stage unneeded vehicles off the street whenever possible. Bring in ambulances one or two at a time and park them in safe locations at the scene. This may be "down stream" from other parked apparatus, or the ambulance maybe backed at an angle into a protected loading area to prevent working in or near passing traffic. At residential medical emergencies, park ambulances in driveways for safe loading where possible. If driveways are inaccessible, park ambulances to best protect patient loading areas.

5.1.4. Wear high visibility reflective vests:

Wear the safety vest any time you are operating in or near vehicle traffic.

5.1.5. Reduce motorist vision impairment:

During daytime operations, leave all emergency lights on to provide warning to drivers.

For NIGHTTIME operations, turn OFF fire apparatus headlights. This will help reduce the blinding effect to approaching vehicle traffic. Other emergency lighting should be reduced to yellow lights and emergency flashers where possible.

5.1.6. Use traffic cones and flares:

MUTCD, NIOSH and NFPA require incident first-responders to provide advance warning to motorists.

Place traffic cones at the scene to direct traffic. This should be initiated by the first company arriving on the scene and expanded, if needed, as later arriving companies arrive on the scene. Always place and retrieve cones while facing on-coming traffic.

Placing flares, where safe to do so, adjacent to and in combination with traffic cones for nighttime operations greatly enhances scene safety. Place flares to direct traffic where safe and appropriate to do so.

Listed below are general recommendations for the start of traffic cones/flammes:

Speed	Distance
25 mph	65 feet
40 mph	105 feet
60 mph	160 feet

At major intersections a call for Law Enforcement response may be necessary. Provide specific direction to the Law Enforcement officer as to exactly what your traffic control needs are. Ensure the Law Enforcement Officers are parking to protect themselves and the scene.

5.2. FREEWAY OPERATIONS CONSIDERATIONS:

5.2.1. APPROACH AND STAGING:

Engine and truck units responding to emergencies on the freeway may respond Code 3 to the freeway, but shall reduce to Code 2 once on the freeway. Staff and/or smaller vehicles may continue Code 3 and/or if freeway traffic is moving slower than your unit and when Code 3 would assist in rapid response

5.2.2. ADDITIONAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:

Freeway emergencies pose a particular high risk to emergency personnel. Speeds are higher, traffic volume is significant, and motorists have little opportunity to slow, stop or change lanes.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) will also have a desire to keep the freeway flowing. Where need be, the freeway can be completely shut down. This, however, rarely occurs.

For freeway emergencies, we will continue to block the scene with the first apparatus on the scene to provide a safe work area. Other companies may be used to provide additional blocking if needed.

The initial company officer, or command, must thoroughly assess the need for apparatus on the freeway and their specific positions.

Companies should be directed to specific parking locations to protect the work area, patients, and emergency personnel.

Other apparatus should be parked downstream when possible. This provides a safe parking area.

Staging of Ambulances off the freeway may be required. Ambulances should be brought into the scene one or two at a time. A safe loading area must be established.

Traffic cones should be placed farther apart, with the last cone approximately 160 feet "upstream," to allow adequate warning to drivers. Place and retrieve cones while facing the traffic.

The termination of the incident must be managed with the same aggressiveness as initial actions. Crews, apparatus, and equipment must be removed from the freeway promptly, to reduce exposure to moving traffic.

6. KEY POINTS:

- Fire and CHP need to establish unified command as soon as possible to jointly provide a safe parking and work area and to quickly resolve the incident.
- Provide specific direction to Law Enforcement as to what traffic control needs you have.
- Where possible, angle apparatus into the curb.
- Prioritize placement of the apparatus by blocking from the most critical to the least critical side. Often times two or more sides may need to be protected.
- To protect pump operator, position apparatus with the pump panel on the opposite side of on-coming traffic.
- Position ambulances to protect patient loading areas.
- Where possible, park ambulances in driveways or position rescue to protect patient loading area.
- Whenever possible, emergency vehicles and equipment should be moved to the right shoulder to mitigate traffic congestion and prevent the possibility secondary collisions.

Appendix A

Illustration 1

